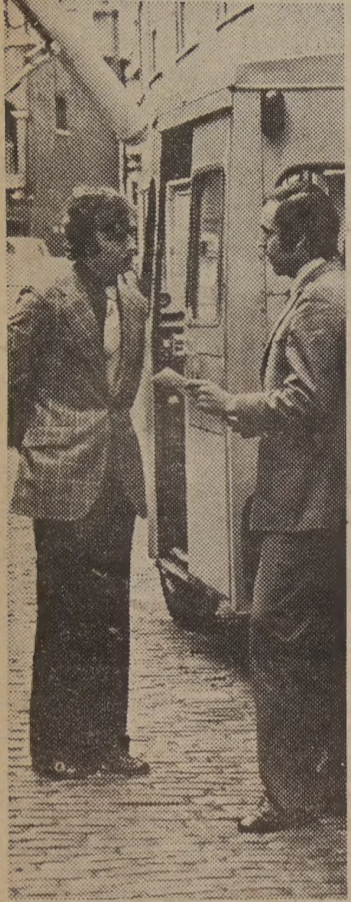


The day Lord Stokes had an unexpected present



Photographers were there to record the journey of the Spastics Cards van from Swindon where it had broken down — again — to its dramatic dumping on

the doorstep of Lord Stokes, Chairman of BLMC. Picture, left, shows Mr. John Kellett, The Spastics Society's Assistant Director, Appeals, show-

ing a television reporter some of the £1,700-worth of bills paid by the Society in an attempt to keep the van on the road. Centre picture shows the van

being towed into London by the Automobile Association — no new experience as the vehicle has spent much of its life on tow. There is an ironic note in the message on the bus, be-

hind the van. Third picture shows some of the Press and broadcasting reporters watching the van being towed by Mr. Kellett to Lord Stokes' home in St. James' Place.

Top Ten's film shows where the money goes

A film camera is trained on a pupil at The Spastics Society's Ingfield Manor School as he learns to walk, or rather as he is being taught to get up on his own two feet and take the first tentative step towards independence. The film is being made by Top Ten to show the work of the Society to the people who do so much to support it — the collectors for the Spastics Pool.

Scenes have been shot at Society headquarters, at Coombe Farm and Sherrards Centres, and at a Day Centre for spastics at Oxford, as well as Ingfield Manor, so that a comprehensive picture of the work for spastics will be presented. The film will be shown at the Collectors Conventions planned for May, and you can read more about them in the Splashes from the Spastics Pool feature on Page 3.

New homes to "rescue" hospital youngsters

A unique scheme to rescue children from the anonymity of life in subnormality hospitals and put them instead in family-style homes within the community was announced by The Spastics Society as a prelude to Spastics Week, which began on Sunday, April 29th.

The Society is to build two residential hostels for severely subnormal children, aged two to 16, at Manchester, Lancs., and Eastbourne, Sussex. The children will live in small homely units adjacent to local authority housing projects and most of them will go out to nearby special schools. Houseparents will act as substitute mothers and as 'Mums and Dads' where married couples are employed.

Because the individual homes are carefully designed to fit in with surrounding housing, minus any institutional air, it is hoped that the 24 children at each hostel will soon be readily accepted as part of the local community. Most will be spastics, but other handi-

caps will be accepted.

Work started on the Blackley, Manchester site on April 30th, and will begin at Eastbourne on June 4th. The total building cost to the Society will be over £4 million. It has also contributed its own architects'

services, representing £17,000 in fees.

The Eastbourne and Manchester local authorities provided the sites and each is contributing £10,000 towards equipment. When the

Contd. on Page 2

— and why Society dumped vanload of trouble

IT really was the last straw. After travelling a costly road of breakdowns, repairs, new engines, trouble and more trouble, and bills and more bills, and after wasting valuable time writing 50 fruitless letters of complaint, and making 200 exasperated telephone calls, The Spastics Society decided it had had enough.

The BLMC 440 van just had to go.

But where? Would it be charitable for a charity to offload it onto an unsuspecting person as a Good Buy? No, that would be a pretty rotten thing to do.

Instead, the Society decided to hand it back from whence it made. To the Company that made it.

And so angry was everyone concerned because of the money that had been drained away trying to keep the van on the road, it was decided to go to The Top, and dump all two-and-a-quarter immobile tons of it on the very doorstep

Contd. on Page 12

Fine start for Spastics Week

SPASTICS Week began on Sunday, and is now well into its swing with an all-out national effort to raise funds and focus attention to the needs of spastics.

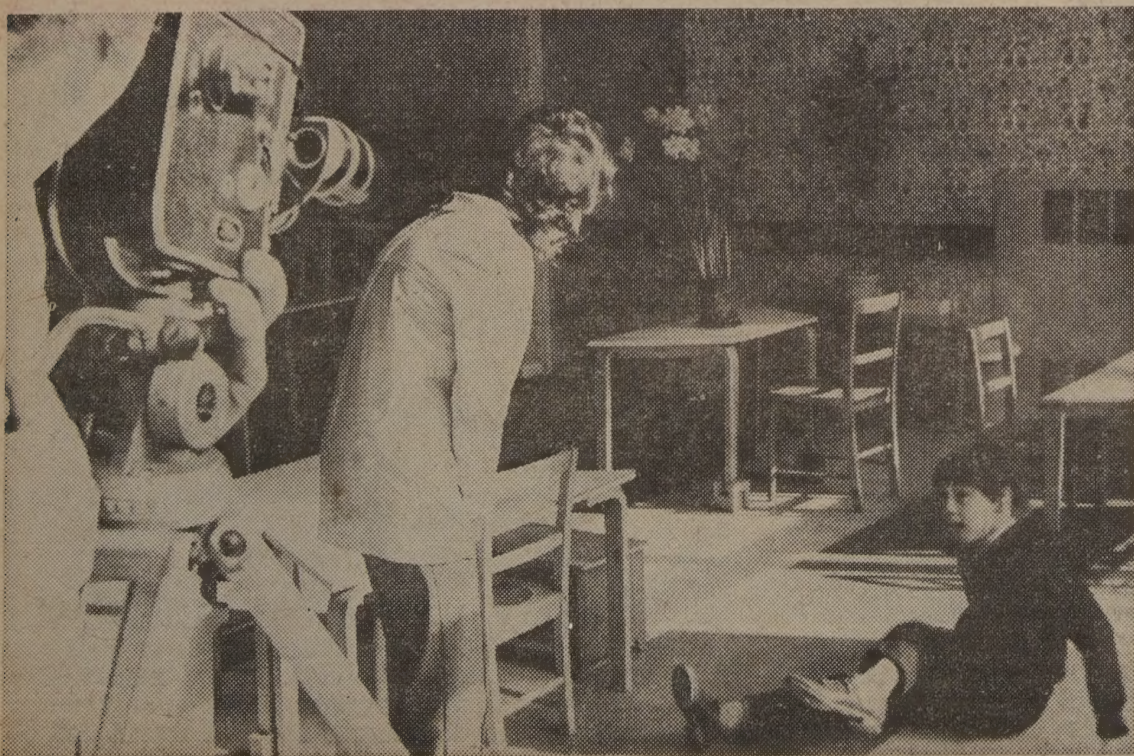
Events, flag days, and house-to-house collections are being held in cities, towns and villages up and down the country, and a million envelopes bearing a message about the help needed by spastics have gone out from the Society's headquarters in London. Throughout this week, or soon afterwards depending on local arrangements, they will be delivered to a million homes asking for cash support for the work of the Society and its local voluntary groups. Everyone who cares about the plight of spastics will be out helping, and even in strife-torn Northern Ireland dedicated volunteers are braving all difficulties to make sure that Spastics Week is a success.

The big Week opened in

London on Sunday, April 29th, with a special service of dedication at St. Martin-in-the-Fields where Sir Geoffrey Jackson who, two years ago, was held captive by guerillas in Uruguay for over six months, spoke on "The Bravest Kind of Bravery."

Sir Geoffrey says: "So many people claim nowadays that only a completely materialistic approach to life is worth anything. This is pessimistic and defeatist! The sheer staying power and long term courage shown by spastics in their everyday lives are an object lesson to us all not to be taken in by such spurious philosophies."

Sir Geoffrey and his wife will be among the guests at a reception to mark Spastics Week which will be held on Friday, May 4th, at Grocers' Hall, London. Also present will be many of the people who have helped the Society in its 21 years' history, and seen it grow into one of the world's leading organisations in the care of the handicapped.



How do the Turners run their home on around £14 a week? What is life like for a disabled couple in days of rocketing prices? The answers are on page

Society launches revolutionary new chair

High hopes for export success



THE FINAL DESIGN
— lightest and cheapest
on the market

A REVOLUTIONARY electric wheelchair was launched on Monday, April 30th, by The Spastics Society at the Royal Society of Health Exhibition at Eastbourne.

The wheelchair has a unique independent suspension system, latest lightweight high-power batteries, a single joystick control, and can be stowed in the boot of most small cars. It always weighs less, and at £295, costs less than its nearest rival.

Called the Newton E, it is being built by spastics at Meadways Works, the Society's Sheltered Workshop at Birmingham. Already there are high hopes of an export market of £1 million. It is hoped too, that the Department of Health and Social Security, which has ordered a chair for test purposes, will make it available under the National Health Service.

Since the design work started two years ago, test chairs have travelled over 1,000 miles at their top speed of 3.85 m.p.h. The unique patented rear suspension means extra comfort, and has put an end to the jerk most chairs give when starting.

It can be used indoors or outdoors, and the special control system makes it foolproof to use. From the centre position, the stubby gear lever is pushed forward for forward, left for left, back for back and so on. Returning it to the centre position activates the powerful brakes. The further you push the stick, the faster



THE PROTOTYPE

John Butler, a spastic employed at Meadway Works, test drives a prototype design during the exhaustive development trials.

by its world-wide network of distributors.

Says a Society spokesman: "We are not only proud of the chair, but of the people who

made it. We feel this project demonstrates that handicapped people can really contribute to the common good when they are given a chance."

New homes "rescue"

Contd. from Page 1

hostels are completed in approximately 14 months' time, the authorities will accept them as capital gifts to the community and assume responsibility for running costs.

The £143,000 Manchester Hostel just off Victoria Avenue East, Blackley, will be built near existing housing. Groups of six children will be housed in four separate living units, each with its own bedrooms, lounge, play area, galley and toilet facilities. All the units will be linked to a central area containing a kitchen, laundry room, utility room and main playground.

The houses will have back doors opening on to sheltered playgrounds and the central area will open on to a larger general playground. Each house will have its own front door to make it as much like "home" as possible and help compensate for the fact that some of the children have been rejected by their parents. Staff will be housed nearby and there will be one self-contained bed sitting room within each of the children's living units.

Pioneers

The Manchester scheme arose since, after the changes in local authority boundaries take place, there will be no subnormality hospital within the greater Manchester area. And this highlighted the need for hostel facilities. Manchester Corporation, however, felt that its financial priorities ruled out such a project for many years. This is why the Society—which has a healthy respect for the Corporation's record in the social services field—decided to "buy time" for Manchester by building the unit itself as part of its pioneer work in the field of subnormality.

The £133,000 Eastbourne Hostel on the Botany Estate is an even more imaginative project since, sited in the middle of a

planned Local Authority housing complex which is to be built concurrently, it will form an integral part of the new community.

At Eastbourne, the accommodation consists of 3 houses each having accommodation for eight children, and all linked to a central area with communal facilities. Each house will have its own play and dining area, galley and toilet facilities. A sheltered playcourt opens from the playroom and each house will have its own staff accommodation built into the block, with a private garden and entrance. The architects have also made provision for a large general playground to act as a neighbourhood focal point and encourage youngsters from the housing estate to mix and make friends with the handicapped children.

This Eastbourne project will relieve the present pressure on hospital beds in an area where hospital facilities are inadequate. It will not only enable some children to be removed from hospital, but provide a real home for others waiting to be admitted.

Says Mr. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society: "We believe that the right life

for mentally handicapped children, spastics or otherwise is a family situation within the community, and not in large anonymous hospital wards.

"These children are not ill. Put them in the right setting and, just like normal youngsters, they respond to affection, interest and continued stimulation. And, as we have demonstrated at our Meldreth Manor School in Hertfordshire, a local community will accept readily subnormal spastic children as part of the fabric of life when it is given the opportunity to see them in normal surroundings.

"Delighted"

"This is why we are so delighted to co-operate with the Manchester, Eastbourne and East Sussex local authorities and the S.E. Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board on such worthwhile projects. Why too, we are examining our development budget to see if we can help finance similar schemes in other parts of the country.

"We only wish we had enough money to bring the majority of handicapped children out into the community where they belong."

Why they bless the brides!

THE spate of weddings which always take place around Easter brought a rush of work to an unlikely place—the Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics work training centre at Hillington, Glasgow.

During the past year or two, the supervisor, Mr. W. Balfour and his staff have devised simple machines which can be used by handicapped young men and women in the centre to assemble book matches. These are then overprinted on the covers with the name of the bride and groom, together with the date of their wedding.

The idea has become very

popular at wedding receptions throughout Scotland and has now been extended to include the overprinting of paper napkins.

"I suppose there are machines which could churn out hundreds of printed book matches every minute but that isn't our object, which is to provide meaningful, useful work for our handicapped people. The orders we have been getting for matches and napkins do just that," he said.

Arthur Askey tried out the Newton E during a recent visit to Meadway Works. He is pictured with general manager Mr. R. G. Miller enjoying the comfort of the chair.

it goes. The two 24-volt electric motors will carry an 11½ stone person up a 1 in 4 gradient.

The Birmingham works are already in the export business with their manually operated chair which is in increasing demand abroad. This is why the Society is so optimistic about the export potential of its revolutionary electric model which will be sold and serviced

Sussex University helps severely disabled

THE University of Sussex, which previously housed its severely disabled students in the sick bay, has now decided to set up a special unit which will be opened this October. Kent Cottage will be purpose-built for four severely disabled students who require daily nursing help. It will not be used for disabled students capable of managing in modified ordinary student accommodation on their own. Students who require help with academic work, e.g. for note taking, or who are not able to move around the University on their own, will have to arrange for help independently as the Kent Cottage staff will only be

available for help within the unit.

Each student will have a study bedroom with furniture and fittings manageable from a wheelchair. There will be properly designed washing and toilet facilities and a communal cooking-eating-living room where all the equipment will be designed to be operated from wheelchairs, so that self-catering will be possible.

A short covered way will link the cottage with the common room of one of the halls of residence. The great majority of the teaching and service areas of the University are accessible by wheelchair and are within about 300 yards of Kent Cottage.



At a dance held by Spalding Spastics Society, 12-year-old Elaine Williams presents a £100 cheque to Group Chairman Mr. Eric Plummer (right). The money was raised by employees at Geest Industries where Elaine's mother works as a canteen supervisor. Elaine was chosen to present the cheque because she had raised £12 of the £100 by her own efforts.

Splashes from the Spastics Pool

Gala weeks at the seaside

DURING the past six months collectors' evenings have been held in many towns and cities throughout the United Kingdom, from Plymouth in the South to Falkirk in the North. But in May there will be the two largest get-togethers for supporters of the Spastics Pool since the first-ever convention at Blackpool last year. On May 5th approximately 1,100 guests will arrive at Pontins Holiday Centre at Broadreeds and on May 12 some 2,000 supporters will congregate at Blackpool.

In addition to the full Pontins holiday programme there will be a number of surprises from the Top Ten Team who will be at the centres throughout the fortnight. A number of lessons were learned last year and some suggestions made by collectors and members subsequently influenced policy decisions. The first convention proved so popular that several hundred of the 1972 guests will be attending the Broadreeds and Blackpool gala weeks.

There will be a short informal introduction by Top Ten Promotion's staff on the Sunday evenings and a full company presentation, incorporating slides and film, on Thursdays.

The Spastics Society's support for Top Ten gala weeks will be wide-spread. Visits have been arranged to various centres to see what is being achieved for spastic children and adults, and representatives of the Society's Information Department will be visiting both holiday centres to answer any questions relating to Society matters. Displays will be installed and literature will be available.

Arthur Dobson, Home-work Manager for The Spastics Society was delighted with the response to his display of jewellery and other items at Blackpool and he hopes for a similar success at both gala weeks.

A warm Scottish welcome for Top Ten team

A WARM and friendly welcome was extended to the Top Ten Team, led by Director Don Long, by Glasgow, Falkirk and Edinburgh collectors at the beginning of April. Each of the three meetings were extremely well attended by collectors and their families, and the Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics and the Scottish Stars Organisation for Spastics were represented.

One of the highlights of the Glasgow get-together was a short speech by Larry Marshall, Chairman of the Scottish Stars Organisation for Spastics, and Douglas Wright and John Hodge, Area Appeals Officers for the Scottish Council, gave illustrated talks at Falkirk and Edinburgh. One result is the possibility of a further meeting of Falkirk collectors being organised for the Autumn. Commander A. Cameron, General Secretary of the Scottish Council, suggested that a visit be organised to spastic centres which would enable Scottish collectors to see for themselves the work that is being carried out.



Pictured at the Glasgow party are: Mr. Douglas Wright, Appeal Officer, Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics; Mr. Norman Kirk, Scottish Area Representative of the Pool; Mrs. Marshall, Mrs. Wright, Commander Cameron, General Secretary, Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics, and Mr. Larry Marshall. Below: A few of the 300 guests who attended the party.



Wheelchair Dancing Festival at the Palais

DRESSED in their best, with a year's hard practising behind them, a dozen teams will take the floor at the Hammersmith Palais on May 10 for the annual Wheelchair Dancing Festival.

They are coming from all over the country and are from every age group. The youngest are two six-year-olds, Ann Deal and Gary Hancox from Burwell Park Cottage, Barkingside, who are in the John Capel Hanbury School, Essex, team, while at the other end of the scale, showing age is no bar to enjoyment, is Mr. C. Mulherron, Kirkcaldy, Fife, aged 64, in "The Fifers" team of the Fife Institute.

Traditional

Some of the dances they will be performing are original compositions, and the traditional and well-loved country dances will be displayed as well.

The judges are Mrs. A. Monzani and Mr. Eddie Ghys, both dancing teachers, and Mr. Tony Franks, Assistant Director, Regions.

Wheelchair dancing has grown from an idea of Mr. A. T. S. Edwards, the Society's Physical Training Adviser, to widen the horizons for the wheelchair bound to a worldwide leisure activity for the handicapped.

International

"Originally it was to help people get about more nimbly in their wheelchairs, and I invented dances to help them. Now teams are enjoying wheelchair dancing every week, and it has spread to other countries. There are wheelchair dancers in Canada, America and Japan, and next year we plan to have the first International Festival," Mr. Edwards explained.

So, in the meantime... take your partners, please!



Above: The Homework Section Display at Blackpool, and right: Some of the younger Blackpool guests with students from Irton Hall, after an impromptu football match.



A very happy Mrs. Joan Davies of Southampton receiving the keys of her Vauxhall Viva from Clement Freud.



Another £1,000 from Phoenix Friends

THE Friends of Phoenix Centre for Spastics at Farnborough, Kent, have presented a cheque for £1,000 to Mr. John Kellett, the Society's Assistant Director, Appeals, as a further donation towards the £50,000 target for the building of the centre. The centre opened last year, but strenuous efforts are still being made to complete the target.

In January, the Friends presented Mr. Kellett with a cheque for £5,000 towards the cost, and are now planning more ambitious fund-raising schemes.

At the presentation meeting, Miss Margaret Morgan, Head of Social Work and Em-

ployment for the Society, spoke of the ways in which the Society and its local groups helped families with a spastic child.

There were four main "crisis points" when help was particularly needed, she said. They were when the parents learn positively that their child is handicapped; when schooling has to be decided upon; when the child leaves school and is seeking employment; and when parents have to consider what will happen to the spastic when they are no longer able to look after him at home.

Miss Morgan also spoke of the work of the Society's Fam-

ily Services and Assessment Centre at Fitzroy Square, London, where children are exhaustively assessed, and where parents can discuss a child's future with experts.

State assessment services were greatly improved nowadays, said Miss Morgan, and she explained that it was unlikely that a new and more hopeful diagnosis about a child would result from assessment at the centre. As a result, some parents were disappointed, and the staff there could help them to get over any initial disappointment and then plan a future course of action to help the child develop his full potential.

Gifts of coaches from generous friends



Sir William Butlin, of holiday camp fame, has presented a 14-seater Sunshine Coach to the Society's Dene Park Further Education Centre in Kent. The coach was received on behalf of the Centre by Mr. George Wood, Chairman of the Friends of Dene Park. He said: "We all know the evening bus service to Tonbridge is terrible, but this coach will make it possible for the students to attend some late functions in town." Picture shows students boarding the coach after the handover ceremony. Picture by courtesy of Kent and Sussex Courier



Singer Matt Munro recently visited Rodney House, the centre run by Manchester and District Spastics Society, to hand over a Sunshine Coach donated by the Variety Club of Great Britain. Picture above, shows Matt Munro handing out lollies to spastic children attending the centre. Second picture, below, left to right: Mrs. D. M. Snowdon, Chairman, Manchester and District Spastics Society; Matt Munro, and the Rev. O. Lloyd-Roberts, Director, Manchester and District Spastics Society.

HELPING DISABLED TO USE TALENTS

DURING Friendship Week for Sick and Handicapped Children, a conference will be held at the Royal College of Surgeons to focus attention on the ways in which handicapped people can be involved in various community activities. Their contribution to society will be seen in a positive way, so that they are encouraged to make the fullest use of all their potentialities at every stage of their development.

The Chairman will be Miss Mary Greaves, O.B.E., until recently Hon. Director, Disablement Income Group. Subjects under discussion will include Community Service Volunteers, the 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award, music for the disabled, opportunity projects for the under-fives and drama for handicapped people.

The conference will take place at The Royal College of Surgeons, 35-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2 on Tuesday, 22nd May, 1973.

Further details may be obtained from: The Conference Secretary, Friendship Week Conference, 31, Raleigh Drive, Whetstone, N20 0UX. Telephone: 01-361 9473 and 01-730 9891.

Mother's time is the best "toy" of all

AS parents of handicapped children know, caring for them is a full time job. With so little time to spare there is not the opportunity to make toys and games as perhaps there would be with an able-bodied child. In fact some specialists would say that it is better to spend any extra time playing with the child rather than making a toy for the child to play with itself.

However there are gaps in the toy markets as in others and it is then that "make-do-and-mend" can be the answer to the problem.

Toys should be suitable to the child's functional development stage and not the calendar age and should be attractive and significant to the child.

Pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, chess and draught pieces can be enlarged by being attached to cotton reels. Other toys can be adapted by having handles fixed to their parts, magnets can be utilised for games involving cut-outs or letters, and dolls' clothes could have zip-fasteners in them, while board games such as dominoes could be easier with wooden blocks attached to the parts.

Sometimes a reduction in sizes is helpful and here for instance puppets could be the fingers of gloves transformed. Changes can be made such as sticking sand-paper to building bricks and creating texture dominoes, or substitutes made like employing weaving cones instead of stacking cubes.

A flannel board face can be used to name the parts of the face, and dice can lose their spots and have parts of the body instead of numbers, to play "making people" when the dice is thrown.

Dolls prams become untippable if they are weighted down with bags of sand and non-slip mats or suction surfaces will steady material in use and stop it slithering away.

All these adaptations are well within the scope of the imag-

inative parent and they can give the child that little bit of extra stimulation that is essential for development.

Many a child has learnt a lot and not just the extent of its mother's wrath, by exploring in the coal scuttle or ransacking the china cupboard. If a child is denied these opportunities to explore by disability, a toy handed to him is not much use and not much fun. It helps, therefore, if the ordinary world and its surroundings are brought to him to handle, play with and 'discover'. The day-to-day household objects are more interesting, much more valuable and a lot cheaper than toys. The "real" educates better on the whole than does the "toy".

Spastic children who cannot talk need to be spoken to more than other children so that they can lay in a store of normal language. So it helps if mother gives a running commentary on her every-day chores whether it's peeling the potatoes or scrubbing the floor.

Children sitting in a chair or wheelchair should be as close to you as possible so that if they get bored you can suggest ideas to them as well as maintaining a conversation. By sitting in front of a mirror all sorts of games can be played to advantage. If a member of the family is involved in an activity send the child to see them at work and encourage them to talk about what they are doing. Let him have the job of unwrapping the shopping which can give valuable and varied experience. It is better to have a small collection of toys that can be



Advice for parents and play ideas

changed often because when your hands are 'disobedient' you soon get tired of the same toys. Little cars that just roll up and down are not necessarily the answer—nor is sitting for long periods in front of the television. If a child does not understand he is just being passive in mind and body.

The spastic child needs to be involved — involved in his games, in his surroundings and with people. The stimulus that he gains from involvement will help him enormously. There is no need to feel that only experts can cope if you think of what able-bodied children experience and follow that line you will manage — especially if you are able to join the spastic child with them in their games—they will teach him a great deal.

Here are some things and suggestions on how to use ordinary objects for play and what to say to the child:

Spoons—First to bang, then to pile up and even sort out the big ones from the smaller ones.

Saucepans—To fit together, to put things into, to put lids on etc.

Plastic plates—Cups and saucers—to arrange, to put things in and to get things out of.

String—Tied on to a plastic cup or spoon, to learn to pull things towards you.

Basket and bags—With an assortment of objects in them; a few of the day's vegetables

(washed). Packets which can be safely unpacked, a few sweets or apples in a paper bag to 'find'.

Thick empty bottles—To get the corks out of—or the screw caps off. Jars to fill up with coloured paper which makes a nice noise when you do get it out, or dried beans or peas.

Clean brushes—Which tell you a great deal about texture.

A box of assorted buttons—When the child is sensible enough not to put them in its mouth to sort in colours and sizes. "Put the white ones in the jar, and the blues ones in the saucepan."

Egg whisk—To turn for a special treat.

A piece of pastry—To roll or even just to try fingers in when mother is cooking.

An old handbag is fine—You have to use your fingers to undo the snap.

Small discarded articles of clothing—Which all feel different and different colours, socks, ties, collars, hats and gloves etc. or just pieces of materials with various textures.

Empty boxes of all kinds—Especially those with lids to them to open, to get things out of, put things in.

Empty talcum powder tins—And scent bottles which smell.

Old spectacle frames—To put on and look at yourself in.

Hoops for practising dressing—Good for movement.

Rubber beach quoits—for practising pulling on socks.

Blowing bubbles—Good for eye control and blowing action.

National Aids for the Disabled Exhibition AND CONFERENCE

naidex'73

30th June to 4th July at the Metropole, Brighton
SPONSORED BY THE CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR THE DISABLED

The National Aids for the Disabled Exhibition will be held at the Metropole Hotel, Brighton, from 30th June to the 4th July, under the sponsorship of the Central Council for the Disabled.

This is the first full scale event at which manufacturers, service organisations and charitable institutions will be able to exhibit every type of aid to all those concerned with the welfare of the disabled.

The aids on display—mechanical, physical, therapeutic, charitable, occupational, recreational, educational—are for the limbless, bedridden, blind, mentally afflicted, crippled, deaf, aged, spastic and other major handicaps.

Naidex is the most important exhibition of the year for everyone who is involved and interested in the disabled. The first two days will be open to the general public as well as trade and professional visitors. But the last three days are restricted to trade, professional and conference visitors only.

At the time of going to press some stand space is still available and enquiries should be addressed to John Fawls, E.T.F.I. at the address below. Or phone 01-668 2467.

National Aids for the Disabled Exhibition 1973
OPEN DAYS 30th JUNE & 1st JULY. TRADE, PROFESSIONAL AND CONFERENCE VISITORS ONLY, 2nd 3rd & 4th JULY.
Exhibitions & Trade Fairs International Ltd. 943a Brighton Rd., Purley, Surrey.
Naidex '73 CONFERENCE ON THE 2, 3, AND 4 JULY 1973.

Please send me tickets @ 15p each.
Please advise me of the party rates for people.
I am interested in the conference programme please send me details. ☐
I enclose PO/cheque for

NAME _____
COMPANY _____
ADDRESS _____

BITS AND PIECES

by The Collector

DISABLED Week this year brought a great deal of pleasure and sense of achievement to the spastic children of Corseford Residential School, Kilbarchan, Renfrewshire.

An art contest organised by Lanarkshire Social Work Department led to a 3rd prize for seven-year-old Lynn Taylor, of Hamilton, and special commendations for Gillian McVey, also aged 7, of Baillieston, and 12-year-old Roy Wilkinson of Airdrie.

In a sports event organised by Glasgow Corporation, two other Corseford children, Paddy Buckler (13) and Caroline Paul (15), won 1st and 2nd places in the Youth Section for skittling.

"These achievements are all the more encouraging in that they were made by children who are very severely handicapped," commented Miss D. D. Smith, headmistress of the school.

* * *
THE Spastics Unit at Middlesbrough General Hospital, Yorkshire, has been given two new television sets by the local Ladies' Circle.

The money was raised at a series of coffee evenings. The first was attended by eight people, who then invited seven other people to coffee... and so on... Each participant paid 10p and the final total amounted to £140.

* * *
SWARKESTON Cricket Club, Derbyshire, holds a cricket match on Boxing Day each year. The 1972 takings of £110 have been donated to the Derby Spastics Society.

* * *
PIPE-SMOKING enthusiasts had a field day in Cheshire recently, when 1,200 of them visited an exhibition organised by the North Cheshire Pipe Club. The event raised £230 for Sale, Altrincham and District Spastics Association.

* * *
COLCHESTER and District Spastics Society has presented £1,000 to Wakes Hall, the residential centre for adult spastics run by the Stars Organisation for Spastics.

The Colchester Group is also to give the Centre an interest-free loan of £2,000. This will go towards new kitchens and workshops at Wakes Hall.

* * *
A FASHION show given by Marks and Spencer at Peterborough, Northamptonshire, has raised £710 for charity. The money has been divided between Action for the Crippled Child and the Society's Wilfred Pickles School, at Duddington.

DISABLED COUPLE REVEAL A TIGHT BUDGET

Life is a struggle when you manage on £14 a week

AS Kathleen Turner roundly told the man from Social Security: "Gerald and I may share the same bed and table but we can't share each other's shoes!"

For life is a struggle for the Turners — it is for most newly-weds. But when you're both spastics the struggle takes on mammoth proportions — against disability, bureaucracy and the perennial problem of money.

Gerald, 41 is severely disabled while Kathleen, aged 42 is so lightly handicapped for it to be almost unnoticeable. They met at The Spastics Society's hotel, the Arundel at Westcliff-on-Sea, the Christmas before last and married on July 1.

They now live on the 13th floor of a London block of high rise flats with Kathleen's 19-years-old son Kit by a former marriage. And they are blissfully happy — "We couldn't be happier, we're very, very happily married" said Kathleen as she and Gerald sat hand in hand in their modestly furnished sitting room.

Marring their bliss however, is the constant pressure of money problems.

Kathleen used to earn £19.20 a week as the supervisor in a dress firm's cutting rooms: "Very boring but very necessary work" and qualified for £3.75 Earnings Related Supplement (E.R.S.). "And we had a Trade Union chap here who negotiated for us to get 35p allowance for Gerald's shoe leather because he's hard on his shoes."

But at Christmas Kathleen gave up work to look after the home and Gerald. "It was provisional at first to see if we liked it or if we got on each other's nerves. It doesn't apply — we can't bear to be out of each other's sight."

Now they live on £10.90 National Health benefit, made up to £14.65 with E.R.S. — the 35p for shoe leather went when Kathleen stopped work. Gerald qualifies for no income at all since he left the Bedford centre



Gerald and Kathleen at home.

at Buxton, Derbyshire.

"This was a great blow because we thought he would get something — after all it would cost £1,000 a year if he was in a home. I don't think £5 a week would have been unreasonable."

As it was the E.R.S. was eight weeks late in arriving and the Turners had to make do with the basic £10.90. In July the E.R.S. will come to and end and in June the Turners should be in receipt of the Constant Attendance Allowance — "but I'll believe that when I see it in my hand" said Kathleen with feeling.

The Turners' outgoings are £6.93 for rent which includes gas central heating, with a rebate of just over £2. "I applied to an Independent Tribunal for a reduction but they ruled that the Social Services assessment was correct."

£1.50 goes out on electricity, another £1.50 on milk and Kathleen estimates she spends £5 each week in the supermarket.

"I give Gerald £1 pocket money and put aside 50p for his shoe leather and dry cleaning and I also try and put away £1 for savings. Neither of us smokes or drinks which makes a great difference but the biggest saving is the fact that we have a three course meal every day at the local meals centre for 7p each. Otherwise I just don't know how we'd manage — food is so expensive."

This outlay means that there

is no money left over for luxuries of any sort. The new stereo record player cost £40 and was paid for with the money given as wedding presents. Their nights out are usually at the Hippodrome for the BBC programme "Friday night is Music Night" and Kathleen summed up their situation with the words: "We may not have everything we want but we have everything we need."

Their furniture belonged to her mother who died a year ago. "Obviously it's not the ultra-modern stuff I might like to have but if we didn't have this I don't know how we would have managed."

"As it is the cost of replacing things worries me. Tables and sideboards might last for years but carpets, bedding and furnishings will have to be replaced one day. I could never have anything on H.P. — the worry would be too great. I've got a wardrobe full of clothes but it's stuff I've had donkey's years. I'm sick of the sight of them and I'd love to buy new clothes. I can dress-make so it's not too bad — but I can't make shoes and stockings."

The fact that Gerald is so severely handicapped is also a steady drain on the family resources.

"Gerald's got fantastic courage. To see him walk you'd think he was drunk, very drunk, but his courage and tenacity shines through and I'm not the only one that says so. My handicap is something

I've conquered and forgotten and I'm very steady, steadier than Gerald. If he's helping with the washing up for instance, there is likely to be a breakage. Kit said the other day 'Is there any cup in this place that isn't chipped?' We laughed about it at the time but replacing things costs money. He uses an electric shaver and that is likely to go wrong if it's given a sudden jerk."

Despite his walking difficulty, Gerald perseveres using a stick: "Don't mention a wheelchair to me" he said. And Kathleen observed. "Wheelchairs wear out carpets and that is something I hadn't realised before. Being handicapped costs money. You know, I think we qualify for a rebate here or a rebate there so I go along and try and get one and 'They' say 'You're over the limit' — crikey — what is the limit?"

Kathleen is also frustrated in her battles to get them a better deal, by the forms of officialdom.

"You used to go along and a clerk would come down and see you and talk the matter over and explain things. These days all you get as a flipping bit of paper that you lose or can't understand because it's computerised and doesn't tell you anything and if you try and find someone to deal with it they just say the relevant papers are in another building — I mean, it just takes months and you never get anywhere."

The Turners hope to move away from London eventually to somewhere where Gerald can do some gardening.

"I'm sure we will too" said Kathleen confidently. "All my life if I've wanted something enough, it's turned up — first I wanted a job where I could keep myself, then a home and a child. They all came along, so this will too!"

How to enjoy work in your garden

UNTIL recently most research aimed at finding ways of making life easier for the disabled and the aged. Lately, more attention has been devoted to making it enjoyable too. Gardening, once an interest open in full only to those suffering from no serious physical disability, can now be enjoyed by almost everyone.

Most gardening books advise gardeners how to look after their plants; "The Easy Path to Gardening" tells them how to look after themselves. This book, published by Reader's Digest in conjunction with The Disabled Living Foundation, is based on eight years' experience at three hospital research gardens run in association with the Foundation. Doctors, occupational therapists and horticulturalists have co-operated in its production, making it the most authoritative book of its kind.

Special tools

The text, which is fully illustrated with explanatory drawings, shows how anyone with a slipped disc, bad balance, a missing limb or arthritis, can cope with gardening problems by using tools to suit their disability, redesigning their gardens and using a variety of labour-saving techniques. Those who have to work from wheelchairs are shown that there are few gardening jobs they cannot do. All of the planning suggestions and techniques can, of course, be adapted by any busy gardener to make short cuts and make his garden attractive and easier to tend.

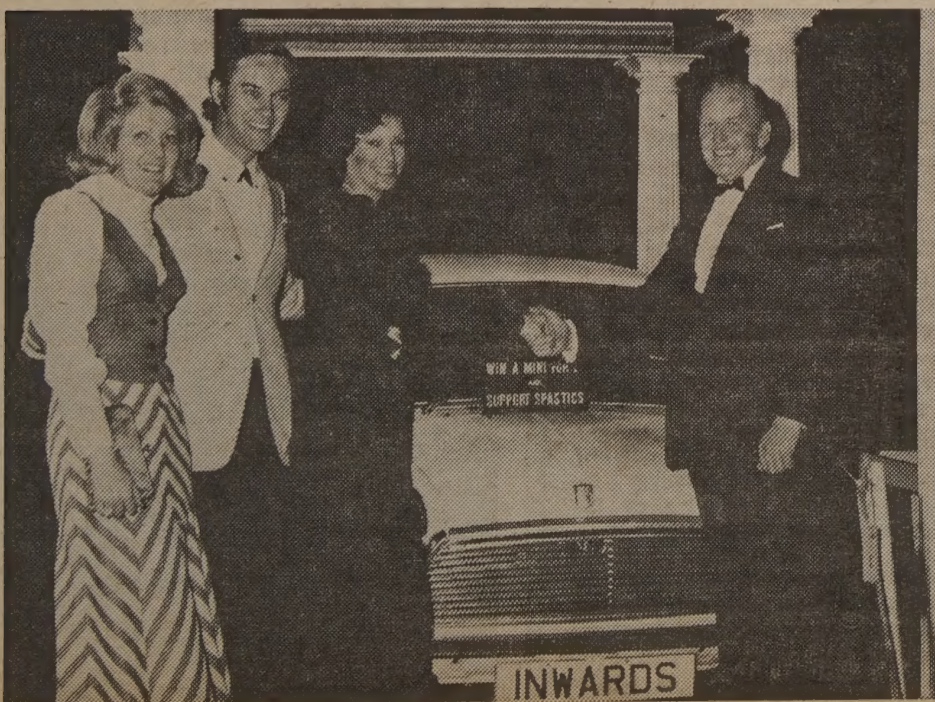
An important section of the book deals with gardening as a therapy in hospitals. It will become a reference work for doctors and occupational therapists helping people back to health to resume their old jobs or, if more seriously disabled, to fit them for a long-lasting, rewarding hobby.

"The Easy Path to Gardening" costs £1.25 with any profits going solely to the Disabled Living Foundation for future research.

Donation for caravan fund

THE largest donation yet has been given to the spastics' holiday caravan appeal fund set up by Coun. Abel Bridge, Mayor of Burnley, Lancashire.

This was a cheque for £425 from a television rental firm. The money is accumulated rent due to all those people who gave permission for the company's cables to be attached to their homes. Each rent is only a nominal amount and all those involved were asked if they approved it being given to the holiday charity fund.



Picture by courtesy of Maidenhead Advertiser

A Gala evening held at Wooburn Grange Country Club, Buckinghamshire, raised nearly £2,000 for The Spastics Society. This brings the total collected for spastics by the club committee since 1967 to £4,400.

The ball was attended by over 300 people. During the evening, Mr. Peter Jordan, Head of Appeals Projects for The Spastics Society, spoke to fellow guests about the problems of charity fund raising and how the Society uses the money to help spastics. He said that the aim was to have a day centre for spastics in every large town, but that this would need a lot of financial support.

The money raised at Wooburn Grange would be used for a specific purpose, he added. This might be the start of a new centre or the provision of some useful piece of equipment such as an ambulance.

In the picture, Mr. Jordan is seen (right) with committee members Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Beresford-Cole, and Ann Koska.

In the background is a new Austin Mini — the first prize in a raffle held during the Gala evening.

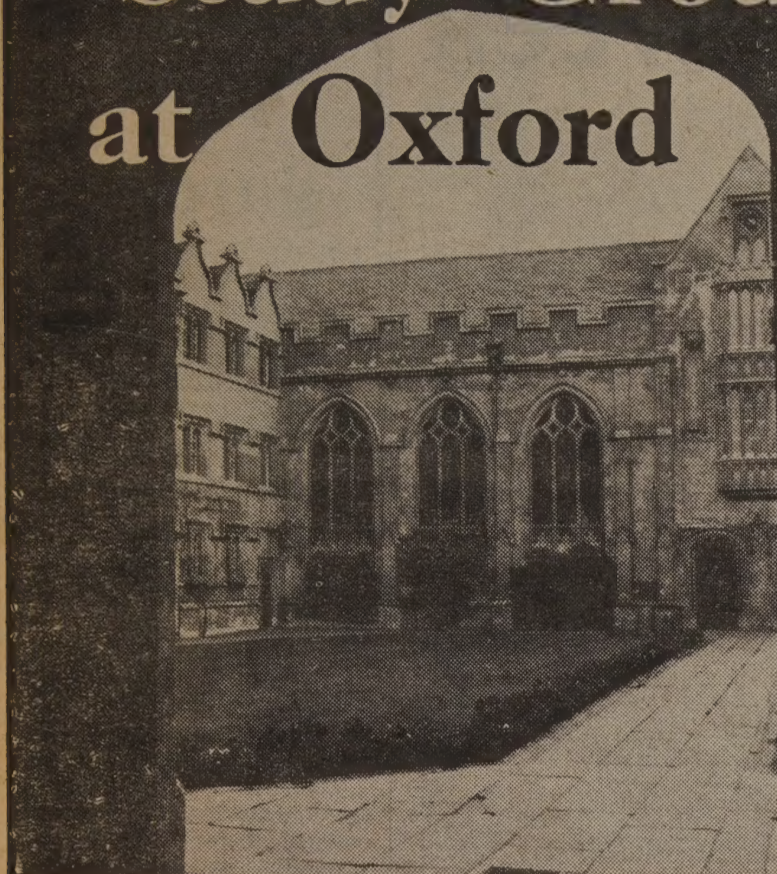
Spastics Games: All set for Area Finals

NEARLY 1,000 are expected to compete in the Area Finals of the Spastics Games next month.

The dates are: Tonbridge and Taunton on June 9, and Norwich, Stamford and Lancaster on June 16.

The National Games will be held at the National Sports Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, on July 21.

International Study Group at Oxford



Dr. B. Epstein, Medical Director of the Rodney House Cerebral Palsy Nursery Clinic, Manchester, with Alderman Arthur Connors, Lord Mayor of Oxford, and Mr. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, at the Civic Reception.

World view on making true integration a reality

SHOULD handicapped children be educated in special schools or take their place with able-bodied children in the ordinary classroom as the first step towards integration into society? This was the theme of The Spastics Society's Annual Education Seminar held at University College, Oxford, in April, and among the 150 people attending from 12 countries, there were speakers from all professions who had personal experience of the problems of integration.

This evidence was valuable in view of the considerable interest which this subject has aroused at primary, secondary and further education level, as information on the feasibility of the exercise is relatively scarce, especially when the severely handicapped are involved.

The interests of the professionals attending covered all types of handicapping conditions — blind, thalidomide, deaf, spina bifida, and cerebral palsy.

Although the specific learning difficulties which these various groups of children encounter differ, their social and emotional problems are broadly the same and if we are to seriously consider the proposition of integration for these children it is basically with these problems that we must deal.

The meeting opened with a paper by James Loring, Director of the Society. He emphasised that special education was brought into existence because of the inability of ordinary schools to educate handicapped children. He explained that besides their cerebral

palsy the children in the Society's schools had an average of 2-3 other major presenting handicaps each, and 50 per cent of them were in wheelchairs. He concluded that administrators lacked realism if they thought that the present education system could absorb them, for he saw the D and E school streams, with no physiotherapy on site and no architectural modifications, as amounting to a prison for these children if they were forced out of the 'special' into the 'ordinary.'

Enthusiastic

Elisabeth Anderson from the Department of Child Development, London University, has been looking in her research at the integration of physically handicapped children in ordinary primary schools. Basically, she found that parents were very much in favour of their children being placed in ordinary schools for they believed the child would obtain a better education, and would benefit socially. The Heads and class teachers, though perhaps originally reluctant to take the handicapped child, swiftly changed their attitudes and were enthusiastic about the benefits of integration once the child had settled down. Socially and emotionally the children seemed to cope as well as their non-handicapped classmates, and academic progress for those without a mental handicap was also in line with that of their fellow pupils.

Margaret Morgan, Head of the Society's Social Work and Employment Department, suggested we should, "question ourselves and our own attitudes, both to the disabled as a group and also to individual disabled people." Although she talked about realistic ways of coming to terms with disabili-

ty, her final point was interesting; to question whether it is really appropriate to towards social integration everyone? Are there seriously handicapped people whom we should try to pull from society? Can this 'pull away' ever be considered coming to terms with the situation and facing reality?

Brian Goldsmith, architect of the I.L.E.A., gave an interesting, factual and account of how he had himself the question: "you on the right level Architect?" when he was to design a school for the disabled. Spending a day in a wheelchair brought all of disasters home to him, including falling into a swimming pool, and as a result he agreed to avoid the accessibility problems so often encountered in public buildings.

Anita Loring described research in which she tried to find out what happened in schools for the handicapped which helped prepare children for adult life. She broadly concluded that the teachers were well aware of the and emotional problems children faced, but because of tight time schedules they were unable to devote as much as they would have liked to the area. The work also showed the vast communication barriers which sometimes exist between staff and children. She pleaded that staff take a closer look at the organisation of the curriculum, perhaps consult with some of their former pupils.

Success

Professor Formica Rome spoke of the work done by the Italian Spastics Society, and outlined the schemes that have been with great success in Italy put handicapped children in ordinary schools. This was a sharp contrast to Dr. Saunders from Paris who showed

Contd. on Page

Literary Contest nears grand finale

DURING the first few days of May the postman's visit will have special significance for eight lucky people—the first prize winners in each of the four sections of The Spastics Society's literary contest for spastics.

As well as advising them that their entries had been awarded prizes by a judging panel of well-known personalities, the letter that each individual winner receives will also contain an invitation to a special celebration lunch at the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre at Fitzroy Square, London, followed by a reception at the Park Crescent H.Q., where they will receive their prizes from Mrs. Harold Wilson, wife of the leader of the Opposition.

Other members of the judging panel will also be present to add their congratulations and to meet the contestants to whom they awarded top marks.

The sections of the contest were judged as follows:—

POETRY—Judged by Mrs. Harold Wilson, who is herself a poetess and writer of a best-seller book of poetry.

SCHOOL CHILDREN—Esther Rantzen, the TV personality well-known for her appearances on The Braden Beat, Nationwide, a late night 'chat-show' which she chaired with Harriet Crawley, and various interview programmes.

YOUNG ADULTS—These entries were judged by Angela Ince, the popular feature writer on the Evening News.

THE OVER 25's—As there were so many entries in this section the judging was shared by Anne Edwards, who writes on a wide range of topics in the Sunday Express, and Colin Reid, whose witty and pungent articles appear every week in the Daily Mail.

The judges were so im-

pressed with the general standard of the entries that they all lamented how difficult it had been to decide on an individual winner in their particular section. They commented that they had been delighted and surprised by the range of topics covered, the imagination shown, the sharp eye for detail, style and the ability to articulate. Many entries just missed winning by the tiniest margin—these have been highly commended by the judges.

Who knows, the writers of this year's 'near-misses' may hit the jackpot next year? Indeed, one of this year's winners has found third time lucky to be true in his case. His first try in 1971 didn't succeed; not put off, he tried again last year, getting a 'highly-commended,' and this year he has finally made it. It pays to keep trying.

Full details of winners, runners-up and photographs taken at the reception will appear in next month's issue of Spastics News.

The prizes in the poetry, schoolchildren and young adult sections of this year's contest have been very generously donated by the Peter Johnson Hotel Group, which includes the Hotel Eden, Adria Hotel and Eden House Hotel in Kensington and Chelsea.

Society seeks help from spastics for insurance survey

HAVE you ever been turned down for car insurance, or do you feel you have had to pay well over the odds because you are a spastic? Have you ever had problems in obtaining holiday or personal accident insurance? Or life assurance? Have you, in fact, ever felt you were being discriminated against by an insurance company in any field?

If so, The Spastics Society would like to hear about your experiences.

The Society has set up a committee to investigate the whole question of insurance as it applies to spastics, in an attempt to discover if they are being unfairly discriminated against in any way. After sifting the evidence from individuals and other sources, the committee and the Society's insurance experts can measure the size of the problem, and decide how best to tackle it.

If you feel you can help the committee please write to the Editor of Spastics News, at the Society's headquarters, 12, Park Crescent, London, W.1. Give full details of any difficulties you have encountered on insurance matters, and please include all relevant personal details. Your letters will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.



Mr. G. H. Steels, Principal of the Society's Dene Further Education Centre, and Mr. Kenneth F. Headmaster of Twydall Primary School, Gillingham, Kent, where he has a special class for physically handicapped children.



Oxford's Lord Mayor gave a Civic Reception



Mrs. G. Anderson of Sweden, Miss M. R. Paull, Assistant Education Officer of the Society; Dr. Simon Haskell, Lecturer at the Institute of Education, University of London, and Dr. G. Ekstrom.



Dr. M. Andrada of Portugal, Dr. L. Ylppo of Finland, Dr. U. Aebi of Switzerland, and Miss S. Levitt, Director of Studies, Centre for Spastic Children, Cheyne Walk.



Mrs. Anita Loring, Study Group Director, and the Lord Mayor of Oxford.



Mrs. Vera Chinchin, Regional Social Worker (South East), Mr. R. Gray, Head of Development, Spastics Society, and Miss Eve Stanger, educational psychologist.



Mr. D'Agostini and Miss Lisa Ariboni from Venice, with Mr. Bill Hargreaves, the Society's Senior Clubs' and Holidays' Officer.



Miss M. R. Morgan, Head of Social Work and Employment, The Spastics Society, Mr. P. K. Mayhew, Headmaster, Thomas Delarue School, and Mrs. D. Gould, teacher at the School.



Dr. and Mrs. Spallina of Rome (right and left of picture), with Mr. David Johnston, Headmaster, Percy Hedley School, and Mr. D. H. Lee, Headmaster, W. J. Sanderson Hospital School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Below: Delegates at one of the seminar sessions.



Dr. B. Krayenbuhl, President of the Foundation for Cerebral Palsy, Switzerland, with (on left) Mr. Reg Maling, Director of Possum Controls Ltd.



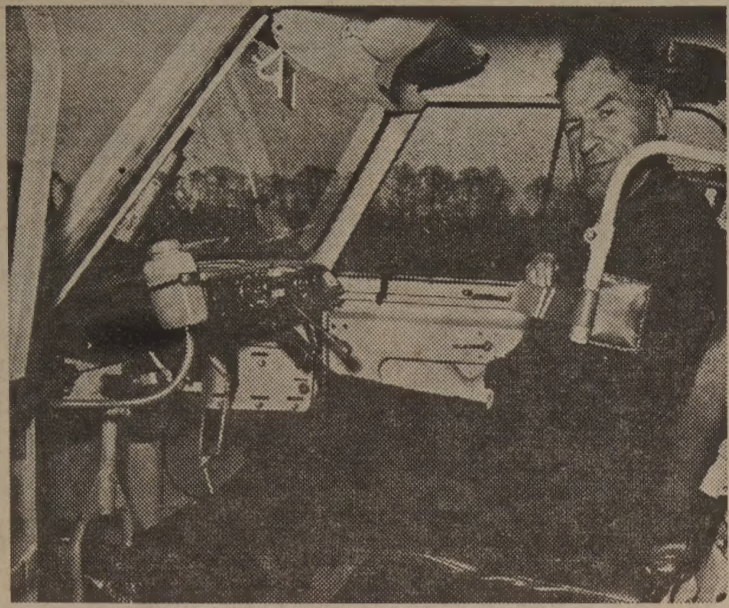
Mr. Lancaster-Gaye, Assistant Director, Services, The Spastics Society, Prof. M. M. Formica of Italy, Alderman John Hamilton and Dr. M. Toledo, of Spain.

Picture of a man who has driven over all obstacles

MR. Tommy Clingo, Chairman of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Spastics Society, has received a new petrol-driven invalid car which he drives without the use of either hand.

Mr. Clingo, who is also Chairman of the King's Lynn St. Raphael Club for the Disabled, steers the car with his feet. Automatic transmission cuts out the need for gear changes and foot switches operate the safety harness, lights, wipers and washers. Indicators and horn are worked by his head and he inserts the ignition key with his teeth.

Previously, Mr. Clingo had an electrically-operated vehicle which went at a speed of 10 miles per hour. The new car will reach 50 m.p.h., although Mr. Clingo says he is quite content with 30 m.p.h. at present.



Picture right: Mr. Clingo ready to drive off in his new car, and left, he inserts the ignition key with his teeth.

Pictures by courtesy of Eastern Daily Press



Scots spastics in winter sports

FOR four young Scottish spastics — two present and two former pupils of Westerlea School for Spastics in Edinburgh — have had one of the most exciting weeks in their lives. They have flown to Norway as members of the British team taking part in winter sports for the physically handicapped.

They are Audrey Simpson of Thurso and Lillian Rae of West Calder, both aged 13, and the two former pupils, Aileen Krzyzanowska and Graham Simpson, both of whom are now studying at a commercial college in the west of Scotland.

During the sports they took part in skiing, ice skating, curling, swimming and sleigh riding events. With the exception of Graham, who went to the Continent from Westerlea with a party of Boy Scouts two years ago, none has been abroad before.

Contd. from Page 7

made for French television in which the attitudes of six handicapped people to society, and society's attitude to them, showed up the many poignant and often bureaucratic difficulties experienced by the handicapped in France.

The second day started with two papers from Sweden, Lillemor Jernquist, a psychologist from Gothenburg, described an individual programme for the training of an 8-year-old spina bifida hydrocephalic boy using conditioning techniques.

Gunnar Andersson from Malmo is a counsellor working with handicapped children and their parents, and also with the staff and other children in the school in which the handicapped child is to be placed. In Sweden some 50 per cent of all handicapped children are integrated in ordinary schools.

Dr. Fletcher from the Roehampton Limb Fitting Centre described how he coped with the emotional problems of the limb-deficient child by emphasising to them what they could do rather than what they could not, and the morning ended with John Wilson from the Department of Education, Oxford University, giving us an account of why we should do well to stop and take a hard look at the "concept of a person" rather than being constantly in a hurry to label people as "law-breakers," "exam failures," "handicapped," etc. He said they needed attention, communication and understanding; given that, they might also need the techniques of various specialists, which could then easily be laid on.

The third day began with three papers from teachers who had practical experience of handicapped children in their ordinary primary schools. Kenneth Foster from Gilling-

ham has physically handicapped children in his school, Heather Jones from Birmingham advises on the child in primary education, and Pauline Skelly has a thalidomide unit in her school in Liverpool. All three had found the initial suggestion rather overwhelming since they had been warned of all the difficulties which would arise with a group of severely handicapped children entering their schools. But, surprisingly, the problems didn't for the most part occur.

Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence gave us a comprehensive view of the problems encountered by the spina bifida child, who will, by the time it reaches late junior school age, often have undergone extensive surgical treatment involving irregular school attendance, therefore its educational backwardness, as well as physical condition, and a possible mental handicap in addition, place very great burdens upon the parents.

Reg Maling talked on the tremendous advantages, particularly to the non-communicating child and the severely handicapped, of teaching and communicating machines. He pointed out that it was quite possible for a child to be able to take a full part in life with the intelligent use of a specially adapted aid, and in particular the POSSUM machine,

Teachers

David Thomas, City of Leicester College of Education, brought home to the seminar the difficulties he faces in running a one-year, full-time, in-service course for experienced teachers in the education of handicapped children. He reiterated John Wilson's words that the handicapped must first and foremost be treated as people.

The fourth day moved on to the problems of secondary and further education. Bob Pedder, Headmaster of Tixover Grange, went back to James Loring's point about severely handicapped children and their learning problems, and explained how he coped with these children in his school. He referred to a comparative study done between his children in a residential special school and a group of non-handicapped children in a local day school. He found that his pupils generally were more aware, more socially adapted, and had a wider range of experiences and interests than the other children, and with his specially trained staff he felt that his children had the best of both worlds.

David Braybrook, a teacher of the deaf from Nutfield Priory School, emphasised the role of both the school and the parents in the education of the deaf child and the need for normal forms of communication to be used. For this reason he advocated the weekly boarding school. The child understands the prime importance of home and also

gains independence from Monday to Friday at school.

Mr. Frost, Assistant Education Officer for Sheffield, has succeeded, largely as a result of parent pressure, in persuading many of the city's normal schools into taking handicapped children. Sheffield is currently undertaking a pilot project for the Department of Education and Science in integrating the handicapped at all levels of the educational system.

Universities

Alan Chamberlain, of the National Innovations Centre, gave a preliminary report on a survey of disabled students at Universities and Polytechnics in Britain. He found fewer disabled students than he had expected in relation to the proportion of the general population entering university, and many establishments had little idea as to whether or not they had any disabled students in the first place! Students who coped best were broadly those who had been to ordinary schools, and were very glad that had done so.

Edward Doherty, principal of Oakwood, who is himself disabled, firmly stated what many other speakers felt, that "vital decisions and choices have always been made for the handicapped person, over-protected and cushioned from unpleasant reality by the structured environment of the special school. By the time he's adult, he is unaccustomed to—in a real sense even unfit for—the hazards, responsibilities and challenges of running his own life in his own way."

Dr. Marc Gicquaud, director of Cornusse, a centre for low average I.Q. cerebral palsied adolescents in France, took up this theme, and explained how he let his students devise their own programmes of recreation and sport whilst undergoing programmes of apprenticeship to equip them hopefully for some form of employment.

Equal rights

The final paper of the meeting was given by June Maelzer, a psychology graduate of Manchester University, confined to a wheelchair with cerebral palsy. Miss Maelzer holds firmly to the opinion that integration at all levels of schooling and in society is absolutely essential.

She exemplified, and put even more strongly, the view that many of us, both in our papers and in discussion, had expressed, that the hour has come when the handicapped must be given equal rights to decide for themselves, and equal opportunities.

Committee members of the Hitchin Spastics Society surround the tombola at their recent annual ball.

Picture by courtesy of Hitchin Gazette



Poverty — the darkest side of disability

"The Disability Trap," published by the Disabled-Ment Income Group—15p.

THIS book is about poverty — the degrading financial hardship of those who, by no fault of their own, fall through the gaps in the Welfare State.

The 12 tragic case histories

BOOKS

by
Anne Plummer

given represent the plight of more than a million disabled people in Britain and Northern Ireland who live without an adequate pension.

The book will not appeal to those who like to read only cheerful stories of "Triumph over Adversity," about disabled people who have made good. It shows the darkest side of disability and ought to be compulsory reading for anybody with a hand in shaping the country's pension laws.

Perhaps the book makes the greatest impact through the comments of the disabled people themselves. Said a 47-year-old woman with rheumatoid arthritis: "You either fight your disability or go under. I think in my case the disability will win, but it's going to have a fight."

A 22-year-old man, paralysed

as the result of a schoolboy climbing accident who has never been able to work—"I did attempt to commit suicide about three years ago. I don't feel any better than I did then. It's just that people are a bit more careful about keeping the means out of my way."

A spastic woman whose able-bodied husband has had to give up work to look after her and their 2-year-old son—"If my husband got ill and died they would have to put me in a home, and that could cost at least £40 a week. And they'd put my baby in a foster home. Surely it's much cheaper to help us in our own home."

The same woman also points out how insulting the able-bodied can be. Many people find it difficult to accept that a spastic can have a normal baby. "When I go out, people say 'Is that your baby? If not, what are you doing with it?'"

"One woman looked at me and said 'You ought to leave other people's babies alone.' I

said, 'I beg your pardon, it's my baby.'"

Obviously, it is impossible to legislate against such gross bad manners, but more financial security might make it a little easier to laugh off indignities of this nature.

As "The Disability Trap" says: "People disabled from birth before they reach working age are particularly badly off. Their horizons are low and bleak. They can expect to face poverty and loneliness. And a great deal of the narrowness of their lives is simply due to poverty."

It adds: "The present lack of allowance for anything but occasional local travel or for small luxuries, inflicts great misery on many of the disabled who must live entirely off means-tested Supplementary Benefits. Such poverty only serves further to isolate them from the rest of the community and the subsequent loneliness is a chronic problem."

No false heroics

"Let the Balloon Go," by Ivan Southall, Puffin Books, published by Penguin—20p.

HERE is a children's story which could be read by adults with equal enjoyment. It is a short but brilliant evocation of what it feels like to be a 12-year-old boy — a tough-minded young spastic in rebellion against an over-protective mother.

The story happens to be set in small-town Australia, but the message is universal. It recounts the events of a few hours in a single day when John is left alone at home.

There are no false heroics of the "triumph over adversity" type, but by the end of that day, which so nearly ends in tragedy, most of the other characters, including his parents, have come to see John in a slightly different light.

Useful, but not quite perfect

"Handbook for Parents with a Handicapped Child," by Judith Stone and Felicity Taylor. A Home and School Council publication—price 15p.

THIS is described as "An encyclopaedia of every kind of help for parents." But I feel it should be approached with caution by those concerned with spastics.

Although The Spastics Society is listed in the book's directory of specific handicaps, there are no cross-references under Education, Employment and Holidays. Nor is there any mention of '62 Clubs—the social clubs run by spastics for spastics—in the chapter headed "Social Life and Leisure."

With these omissions, the handbook gives a misleading picture of the wide range of services available to spastic children, and this may equally well apply where other organisations are concerned.

However, some parents might find the booklet useful as a rough and ready guide to more general provision for handicapped children, and at 15p it is well within the reach of most people's pockets.

Copies are available from: CASE Publications, 17, Jackson's Lane, Billericay, Essex, or from: NCPTA, 1 White Avenue, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent.

The handbooks cost 15p each with discount of 33 per cent for orders of 50 copies and over. All prices include postage.



Good deeds by the Borstal boys

Timothy Medhurst, aged seven, tries out a "Hobcart" which has been presented to the Medway Towns and District Spastics Society.

The car was designed by boys at Stoke Heath Borstal, Shropshire. Their counterparts at Rochester Borstal, Kent, helped Gillingham Strand Social Club raise the money to buy it.

Picture by courtesy of Chatham News

Glittering success

IN just over nine months, Mrs. Sally McKechnie of West Bromwich, Staffordshire, has sold spastic-made jewellery to the tune of £1,555, which represents a retail value of over £2,000.

Mrs. McKechnie, whose husband is Appeals Chairman of West Bromwich and District Spastics Society, found a ready market among her friends for the jewellery and also sold it in various local pubs and clubs.

Jewellery sales on this scale mean a great financial and psychological boost to spastics working in their own homes who are unable to find outside employment.

Mr. A. Dobson, The Spastics Society's Homework Manager, thinks this is the largest amount of jewellery ever sold by one person in so short a time.



Ernest Barnes, Chairman of the Residents' Committee at Drummonds, the Society's Centre at Feering, Essex, presents a rug to Mr. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, as a belated wedding present from residents and staff. Mr. and Mrs. Loring have been married for some time, but the spastics at Drummonds decided to wait until Mr. Loring was visiting the centre so that they could hand the gift over personally.

Building the right design in the right place can mean freedom

NOT so much a ginger group — more a way of eventually making life as nearly normal as possible for the disabled. That is one way of looking at C.E.H. Behind the fairly formidable title Centre on Environment for the Handicapped is a unique organisation. Hopefully the first of many, it is so far just the first in the field of giving design advice and information on the environment for the handicapped.

The Centre was born in 1969, the brainchild of Kenneth Bayes, FRIBA, FSIA, who, with architect Sandra Francklin as a consultant and a part-time librarian, built up a library of books, plans and slides from the nucleus of their personal collection and answered any queries that came their way.

Then in 1971 it expanded with more staff and now operates from premises loaned by The King's Fund Centre in Nutford Place, near Marble Arch, with a staff of six.

Judith Higgins, MA, is the Centre's librarian and information officer, and she said: "We give quite a generous amount of time to architects and design students who are doing theses. That way we get ideas into their heads at an early stage. We are trying to disseminate the right architectural ideas and we follow current thinking. For instance, our next publication looks at the younger chronic sick still shoved in geriatric wards or in large units when many could live in the community—given a little help. So we give advice to local and hospital authorities on all sorts of things from sheltered workshops to designs for play centres and equipment."

Sandra Francklin is at present working on the use of normal housing for the mentally handicapped. She described how difficult it used to be to pick up information about new developments. "We could see the need for an International Centre with lots of contacts and we hoped that similar institutions would be set up in other countries, but so far this is the only one.

However, our kind of work is done on a voluntary basis in some other countries, and there are units in America and Denmark.

"Originally we were primarily concerned with the therapeutic effect of environment. We are more concerned with planning now.

"For instance, if we had time and staff we could advise parents who came to us about adapting their homes and finding their way round legislation. At the moment the service we offer is free.

"There is a terrific problem of buildings going up that are bad, and this Centre's job could be expanded. But first we have to cope with the number of enquiries that we have at the moment. Still, the situation is more hopeful than in other countries. But some authorities still do some appalling things. Hospital Boards can design whatever they like within certain limits set out in the White Paper, and it's very difficult for people to step in and criticise. Buildings costing under £1 million are not examined as far as detailed design is concerned by the Department of Health, and these are often buildings for the handicapped. So in many cases Hospital Boards design out-of-date accommodation and that's the problem we'd like to solve.

"It's usually a question of persuading architects to provide as near normal accommodation as possible. In the past they concentrated on special needs of the handicapped, and this set them off on the wrong track. It's more a question of minimising difficulties and differences while allowing access and use. There are all sorts of ways buildings can be carefully designed to be therapeutic and meaningful to the han-

dicapped, and then it's normally useful to everybody else. In general planning we'd not press for anything except ramps and suchlike for access and use.

"In fact, there is quite a lot of overlap between the needs of the handicapped and the rest of the population. The same needs if we did but know it.

"Fortunately Hospital Boards and local authorities from all over the country have gone on to build in a substantially different way as a result of our advice.

"Unfortunately, one problem is that it takes quite a long time for architects to understand the needs of the disabled. It is not only the doctors and nurses we need to work with, but the disabled themselves.

"In fact, we've had some very successful conferences where the disabled have spoken, and they are much more lively than the conferences with doctors!"

Problems

Selwyn Goldsmith is another consultant, and he describes himself as a non-architect. He has written a book, "Designing for the Disabled," which was published by the RIBA and is at present working on the third edition due out later this year.

He works four days a week at the Department of the Environment in the Sociological Research branch of the Housing Development Directorate, looking at the housing problems generally of the disabled.

He has been with C.E.H. for a year and has been involved in the highly successful series of seminars that have been run over the last few months.

"They started with about a dozen people and have grown. It's better to get a few intelligent people to talk among themselves than have one to preach to the rest."

The seminars have covered a range of subjects from looking at housing alternatives, educational services, residential homes and so on. He sees C.E.H. as having a lot of scope for offending local councils, because it can afford to be critical of what is going on, but not getting too up-tight about it. There is a role for organisations to argue, from a detached point of view. C.E.H. is useful — one can assemble people and get a lot of fertilisation of ideas and clarification of concepts and problems.

Does he see the buildings of

tomorrow being better designed for tomorrow's disabled?

"I've always been a pessimist about how far architects can get things changed. Cut out one or two steps here and there, and it's going to be a wonderful Utopia."

Kenneth Bayes, the founder, was formerly C.E.H.'s Director — now he is on the Advisory Council (as is The Spastics Society Director, James Loring). The Director designate is George Miles, who has been seconded from the Department of Health. He sees C.E.H. as bridging the information gap between Ministries and Departments involved with the handicapped.

"We are currently engaged in preparing and publishing major design guides. Then, of course, there are a number of smaller papers written by the people here or brought in from outside.

"By improving buildings and services, disabled people in the future will find involvement in society much easier."

He criticised those authorities who tended to skip their homework. "There's a tendency to tear away and put buildings up because of immediate local pressures, and it turns out to be the wrong building in the wrong place. Not because the pressures are not real, but because the overall need or service hasn't been seen in the round but designed for in a vacuum. I think you could say a great deal more rapport and communication is necessary between hospital boards and local authorities.

"With the new Health Service organisation in 1974 this will have much more chance of achievement because the new area health boards and local authorities will be more closely involved with one another."

Jean Symons is another C.E.H. part-time consultant who is at present working on a major series of design guides, the first of which is directed at improving existing hospital buildings for long-stay patients. A fairly massive work of three documents rolled into one has just been published and costs 50p. "There just wasn't any design advice available, and there is so much to be done in all categories."

The work of C.E.H. is funded by the Department of Health and Social Security with grants from the King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, which also gives them space to operate from The King's Fund Centre, and from The Spastics Society.

Liz Cook

Holiday trips for disabled children

A NEW organisation known as DIVE (Disabled International Visits and Exchanges), has been set up in the New Forest holiday area. It arranges exchange visits for disabled children with their counterparts in foreign countries.

The project is sponsored by the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges and the British Touring Association.

It is a non-profit making venture which could open up exciting new possibilities of foreign travel to spastics and other handicapped children. It will enable many of those taking part to stay in houses which are already geared to the needs of a disabled person.

Piloting the scheme is Mrs. Kay Duncalfe, Corner Cottage, Hangersley, near Ringwood, Hampshire.

Will you be a pen friend?

MISS Edith Davis, of West Norwood, South East London, has asked us to help her find a pen friend, preferably male, aged about 35, living in the London area.

Miss Davis, who will be 31 in August, is interested in watching TV, pop music and cooking. She is unable to walk without aid.

Please contact her direct at the following address: Miss Edith Davis, 142, Rommany Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.

"Tiddlers" galore

A total of £19.40 has been collected for spastics at the Shoulder of Mutton public house, Assington, Suffolk — all in halfpennies. Pictured centre, in the picture below, is Mrs. Valerie DeMax, area collector for The Spastics Society, emptying the bottles in which the "tiddlers" were collected. Also in the picture are the landlord and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Perfect. The teddy bear is a prize for a forthcoming competition to be held at the pub.

Picture by courtesy of Suffolk Free Press



Doctors said College-boy Peter would probably make a road sweeper...

PETER Rhodes was born spastic, totally deaf in one ear, and with impaired hearing in the other.

At the age of four, doctors said that he would have to go to a mental institution. By ten they had relented and said he would probably make a road sweeper. And now 17-year-old Peter, of Alexandra Avenue, Luton, is at a college of further education and hopes to work in electronics.

Lip read

Peter's improvement has been enormous, but he still has to make much progress. He has had to learn to lip read and, more difficult, to speak sounds he has never heard.

He is better at hearing

low-frequency sounds — like the vowels—than the higher-frequency consonants, like the s, th, f, v and and ss, for example.

So when someone says speech to him he can hardly distinguish it from peach. And when he tries to say switch it sounds like itch.

Unlike people with proper hearing, he cannot hear sounds. What he does is to feel them. He can play the organ and hear what he is playing through the vibrations. And he first learnt to speak by placing his hands on vocal chords.

Peter's education has necessarily been behind his contemporaries. He had no vocabulary whatsoever until he was seven, and he could not run until he was eight.

He was a year behind his

age group at Denbigh High School, where he was in the D stream. He used to run out of lessons he had from a teacher with a big bushy beard because he could not see his mouth move to lip read.

He did not read until he was ten years old. He then developed an interest in electronics. In the books on the subject he could understand the circuitry, but he also needed to read the technical words, so he started learning to read.

Exams

Now his interest in electronics has led him to Brixton College of Further Education where there is a special course for the deaf. In the summer he will sit six "O" levels and the Part Two examination

in Telecommunication for the City and Guilds.

But the amazing success he has had—when he was seven a six-second gap was measured between a sound being made and his brain comprehending—does not mean that there are no problems.

He cannot tell if he has dropped something unless he is standing on a wooden floor and he can feel the vibrations through his feet.

Shout

And he often has trouble when people realise he is deaf. They start to shout, and this distorts the mouth movements, making it difficult to lip read. Other people become impatient when his speech is not clear — not realising that he is often saying things he has never heard.

The job of teaching these skills used to rest with an institution or boarding school. But nowadays the emphasis is much more on an ordinary family life.

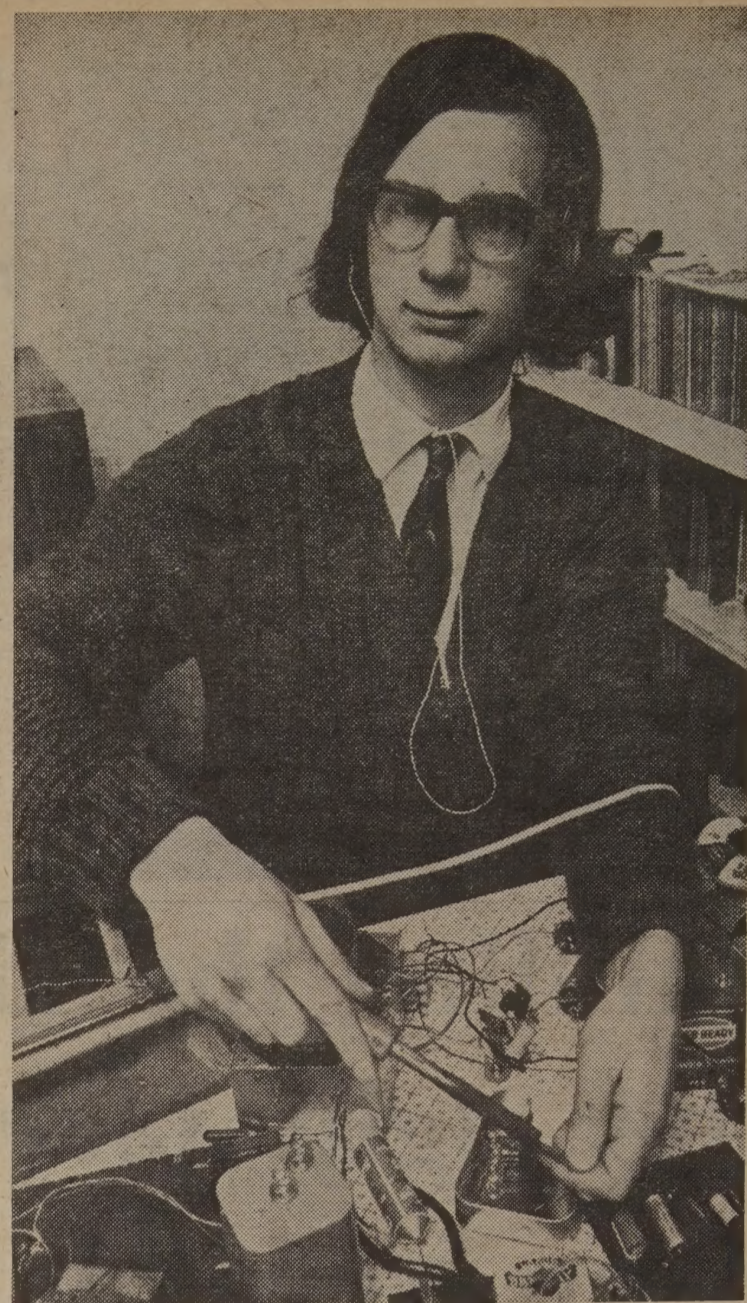
The main teaching is done by the family supported by a peripatetic teacher who goes to the various homes giving advice.

Even such basic things as breath control have to be taught, because it is only when people want to say things that they have to hold their breath.

Peter is only one of many deaf children in the area. His success is only partial, but it is definite success. It is not a miracle. Instead it is a product of hard work and attention from him, his family, and his teachers.

Article and picture by courtesy of Luton News

A sponsored walk held by the Cornish Spastics Society recently raised £150. Among those taking part were team members of the Choughs, national wheelchair dance champions, who were pushed over the 10-mile course by relays of helpers.



Local jobs sought for handicapped

DISABLED people in the Lewisham area of South East London have a very go-ahead organisation working on their behalf. As well as arranging hair-dos for the homebound as reported in last month's Spastics News, the Lewisham Association for the Handicapped organises shopping expeditions for disabled people who do not attend any Clubs or Centres.

Its monthly newsletter gives advice on such matters as Registration with the appropriate Social Services Department, and the importance for householders of not admitting unauthorised callers.

The latest issue reports on employment problems for disabled people in Lewisham. There is little industry in the Borough itself and some disabled members of the association travel as far as the City or West End to work. This is expensive and tiring, however, and many of these commuters would much prefer to work locally if jobs were available.

The newsletter adds: "It would be wonderful if local shops and offices would, where practical, give disabled people the opportunity to prove themselves as good and reliable employees..."

AT the annual Flag Day of Cardiff and District Spastics Society, one of the collectors, Peter Stephenson, raised £56.46 single-handed.

Peter, who is a spastic

himself, attending the Sully Work Centre, was out from 9.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. During the day he returned three times with a full tin to the Regional Office, where the money was being counted.



The Cwmbran DD Tremblers, a group who work for charity in Wales, have presented a Chairmobile to the Monmouthshire Spastics Society. The presentation was made by comedian Stan Stennett, who is pictured trying out the chair. Standing (right) is Mrs. Clarrie Williams, Chairman of the Monmouthshire Spastics Society. The chair is now in use at the Cwmbran Spastics Work Centre. A gift of £45 was also received from Griffithstown Young Wives, when members made a tour of the centre recently.

Residential care workers seek new image

FOR a long time residential work has been the Cinderella on the social work scene. Widely criticised because of the dangers of institutionalisation it has been the subject of a good deal of neglect. The vast majority of its workers are still totally untrained and although they are the only people who have to cope with clients of all ages and varieties of handicap in the face to face, residential work is still re-

garded as second best to the more respectable social work skills of family case work.

But things are beginning to change and the bringing together of residential care for the elderly, for disturbed and separated children, for mentally handicapped children and adults not to forget the mentally ill and physically handicapped in the reorganised Social Service departments has highlighted the enormous size of the problem.

There are more than 80,000 children and young people in residential care under local authorities. By

the end of the decade there will probably be almost 200,000 elderly people in residential homes. Government plans for better services for the mentally handicapped predict 5,000 with residential places for children by the early 1980's.

Add to this places in hostels for the adult mentally handicapped, to say nothing of vast increases in day care provision for handicapped people and the picture of residential and day care as a minor offshoot of the Social Services becomes distinctly ridiculous. In fact residential care alone is estimated to burn up about three-quarters of each year's

local authority Social Services budget.

The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work which is the statutory body responsible for promoting and monitoring social work training has at last woken up to the size of the problem. A special Working Party is engaged on making early proposals for restructuring training for residential care. A massive import of resources will be needed if qualified staff are to be available to meet the challenge. The challenge is a very real one because residential care is expensive and as domiciliary services in the community are improved, those who would use residential care and treatment will be those who need the most expert and

sensitive handling. It is no longer a job for well meaning amateurs although a compassionate concern for the dignity of the individual will continue to be a major qualification for work in this very difficult area.

In the past, on the whole, staff have been isolated and undervalued. Child care workers have had the benefit of a professional association for over 20 years which has done something to speak on their behalf and to put residential work on the map. Now the Residential Care Association has broadened the basis of its membership to include all those engaged in residential and day care work with children, the elderly and the handicapped. It looks for a membership of 10,000 by the early 1980's but if it is to be success-

ful it will need to overcome the apathy which has characterised residential staff. A silent dedication to the needs of the client is all very well but in days of scarce resources whispers are unheard.

This year's President of the Residential Care Association Robert Kydd, a tutor in residential social work in Aberdeen, said recently: "to be full of our own good intentions is not enough, if people in residential care of all ages and degrees of handicap are going to get a square deal in the future, we shall need to build a professional association which has identified most of the problems and has begun to come up with some answers".

JOHN KNIGHT

Quartet on wheels skated "for those who can't"

THEY weren't only here for the beer!

The footsore and weary University students who skated into London on April 4 brought with them more than £300 for The Spastics Society.

The intrepid wheel-borne quartet, Frank Wilcox, Andrew Kowalczyk, Elizabeth Somerville and Pat Sanders, all aged 20, of St. Andrew's University, Scotland, had been taking part in the Great Tartan Race organised by the Scots brewery of William Youngers.

The race was in aid of charity with three sections and our fearless four chose the second category which was to raise the most cash between Edinburgh and London.

They didn't win but the sum they raised, £327.75, collected in four days and to be shared between The Spastics Society and the sister organisation, The



— and the cash rolled in

Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics, put them fifth in a total of 15 entries.

Standing in the Royal Scot hotel, London, the race's finishing post, the four were glad to take the weight off their skates, and recall the journey down via towns like Carlisle, Burnley, Sheffield and Leeds. The theme of their entry was "We're roller skating for those who can't" and their car was decorated with a "lunar module" as a focus for collecting in the various towns.

They had some notable successes and best forgotten fiascos. "The slogan on the car lasted as long as Carlisle, where it was snowing," Frank, the leader, explained. "They may have been on roller skates but they didn't just skate through the event—they were rained off in Sheffield and Leeds, suffered a puncture on the M1, cut fingers and a broken windscreen."

On the credit side was overwhelming generosity in towns

like Burnley where they went round all the pubs and Maidenhead where townsfolk contributed more than £100 in a morning.

Looking back, Frank and Andrew reminisced: "We're hardened campers but if it hadn't been for the girls who weren't used to roughing it we might have given up. We can't praise the girls enough and we're sure their tartan hot-pants prompted a lot of the donations!"

The girls' hot-pants and tam o' shanters were given free by the St. Andrew's Woollen Mills and the four pairs of roller skates (plus plenty of spare wheels which proved unnecessary) were given by Jacob roller skates.

"None of us had roller skated since we were children," explained Pat, "and one problem we had to overcome was zooming up to people to ask 'Would you like to help spastics?' and then finding we had sailed past them."

Said Frank: "After a while we could spot those who would give and those who wouldn't. There were quite a few people whose necks we would have liked to wring. As it was, a lot of people would start to refuse, realise it was for spastics and then change their minds and give. Also many people commented that they thought the Government should be doing more."

"Really the biggest disappointment was the weather—we didn't mind sleeping all four in the car with just six hours sleep a night if we were lucky because of the cold, when we had intended to camp—but if it hadn't been for the drenching rain in Sheffield and Leeds we could have made so much more. We lost a terrible amount by not being able to collect in those two towns."

But are they downhearted? Not a bit of it. "We're all looking forward to doing it again next year and winning too,"

Family research throws new light on genetic code

RECENT advances in the diagnosis of genetic disease in handicapped children was one of the principal subjects covered at The Spastics Society's North East Regional Conference held at Harrogate, Yorks., on Sunday, April 29.

The speaker on genetics was Dr. G. A. Machin, lecturer at the Society-supported Paediatric Research Unit, Guy's Hospital Medical School, London, who explained that latest research shows that families with a certain type of genetic code may be more prone to produce handicapped children.

Dr. Machin also discussed the maternal age factor in pregnancy and handicap. At present, he says one in every hundred mothers over the age of 40 gives birth to a mongol child. Above the age of 45 this percentage of mongol births rises dramatically to one in 40. And these figures, he believes, are on the conservative side.

When all forms of handicap are taken into account the

'over forty' mother risks an even higher chance of producing a handicapped child.

Other speakers included Mr. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society who spoke about some of the current problems faced by the Society; and Mr. J. H. Fortescue, Headmaster of Chantrey School for Cerebral Palsied Children, Sheffield, who discussed education of the spastic child. Mrs. Charlotte Williamson, Vice-Chairman of the Pre-school Playgroups Association, spoke on playgroups and their value to handicapped children.

The conference was attended by local authority representatives and teachers from special schools as well as members of local spastics groups from all parts of Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland.

LEGS says Let Everybody Give



Something

LEGS is the eye-catching name for a fund-raising organisation in Peterborough, Northamptonshire. The charity, whose initials stand for "Let Everybody Give Something", aims to buy a new mini-bus for local physically handicapped people.

Councillor Joe Pearlson, Chairman of the Peterborough and District Spastics Society, is pictured, centre left, presenting a £100 cheque — the Group's contribution to the fund — to Dr. Hamilton Weaver, Chairman of LEGS.

Picture by courtesy of Peterborough Standard.

What should "education" mean for these children?

"HOW far is 'education' as such applicable to the mentally handicapped?" asked Dr. Neil O'Connor to a packed audience of parents and professionals who had travelled to London from all over the country to attend a conference on education, organised by the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children. Dr. O'Connor concluded that the best approach to education for the handicapped was to recognise the inherent limitations of the child, and to teach within those limits. The purpose of the conference was to decide just what those limits are, and how best to educate the child to its full potential.

Training needed

First speaker was Professor Alan Clarke, Head of the Department of Psychology at the University of Hull, who took as his subject "The basic problem". Professor Clarke discussed the work of educationalists both in England and abroad, and pointed out that although these researchers approached the problem of education for the mentally handicapped from very different angles, their findings were remarkably similar. They concluded that learning can be effective for the mentally handicapped, that initial differences between children with different forms of mental retardation can be lessened by training, and that, unlike normal children, mentally handicapped youngsters are unable to profit from ordinary life experience.

Professor Clarke believes that certain clear principles emerge from this: a one-to-one pupil/teacher relationship, even if only for a limited period, can be highly effective; structured education in a pleasant context is necessary for severely subnormal children, who do not "learn by discovery" as normal children do.

Thirdly, Professor Clarke warns that too few teachers recognise that a retarded child responds best to high expectations and demands from parents and teachers, and that assessment is useful only to indicate a base line and as a check on progress. All too often assessment is misleading because it does not admit that a child's performance can change dramatically. Professor Clarke believes that education for a mentally handicapped child should aim at the basic principles of a "simple life," and should be geared to the future. A child who is to go into an institution will need a very different education from one who is to live and work in the community.

Professor Clarke went on to stress the importance of the family in the development of the child, and to lament the fact that so few financial resources are available to benefit the handicapped. He also pointed to the present shortage of trained teachers of the mentally handicapped, a theme later taken up by other speakers.

After Professor Clarke came Miss J. F. Ridding, who as Assistant Education Officer of the Inner London Education Authority is responsible for the administration of special schools in Inner London. Miss Ridding began her talk on "Developments since April 1971" (when responsibility for the education of the handicapped was transferred from the DHSS to the DES), and in an interesting and lively paper she explained all the "ins and outs" of transfer from the administrator's point of view. Like Professor Clarke, she regretted that the two-year course for training teachers of the mentally

handicapped was to be phased out so soon. She felt that this would result in a shortage of trained staff, since many people were unable to take the new three-year course due to family commitments, or because they did not have the right qualifications. ILEA could provide "in-service" training to compensate—but this would not turn out qualified teachers.

Help for over-16s

Miss Ridding concluded that ILEA's contribution to the field of education for the mentally handicapped lay in its curricular development, and in its ambitious programme of extended education for the over-16s. ILEA recognised that when mentally handicapped youngsters reached 16 they were just coming to the stage in their development where they could really profit from education, and that it was therefore wrong to force the mentally retarded into work at this age. A pilot scheme was being launched to give the mentally handicapped some kind of further education, especially in leisure and social activities.

The next speaker, Mr. W. Brennan, also stressed the necessity of further education for the mentally handicapped of 16 and over, and looked forward to the day when there would be a section specially for the retarded in every college of further education.

Mr. Brennan is one of Miss Ridding's colleagues on the Inner London Education Authority. He is an Inspector for Special Education and advises on the staffing of special schools, and was therefore very well qualified to speak on the subject "What training do teachers require?" Mr. Brennan spoke in no uncertain terms of his distrust of the new three-year courses for training teachers of the mentally handicapped. Under the old system of two-year courses, he

said, students entered the course after working with the mentally handicapped for two or three years. They therefore had a real commitment to the handicapped, and knew how to communicate with them. But under the new training scheme, would-be teachers of the subnormal are selected straight from grammar school. How do the selectors choose suitable candidates? And, more important, under the three-year scheme, the course on teaching the handicapped is just part of a curriculum which deals with education as a whole. Mr. Brennan contests that there is not necessarily a continuity between the pupil-management skills required to teach normal children, and those needed to teach the subnormal. Furthermore, he asks if it is necessary for teachers of the mentally handicapped to acquire the level of skill needed to teach normal children.

Ordinary school?

Last speaker of the day was Mr. R. Gulliford, a senior lecturer in education at Birmingham University, who discussed future provisions in education for the retarded. He said that the aim of education should be the optimum development of each child's physical and intellectual capacity, and that the school should set itself certain general objectives. It should aim to develop the child's capabilities in six areas: language, attainment of reasoning processes, awareness of self, expression and control of emotions, making and maintaining social relationships, and physical skills.

Mr. Gulliford feels that wherever possible handicapped children should be integrated into ordinary schools, but that their teachers should have access to a good advisory service. Parents also need professional advice from the time when their child is born.



Peter MacBryan of the Disabled Drivers Action Group, shows Edward Heath, James Loring, Charles Pocock and Graham Hill, the great degree of control he has over his adapted Mini.



Recalling the time when ace racing driver Graham Hill was forced to drive one of the official three-wheel vehicles, he is seen here presenting Premier Edward Heath with a cartoon of Graham pointing to a three-wheeler and saying: "Try sailing it".

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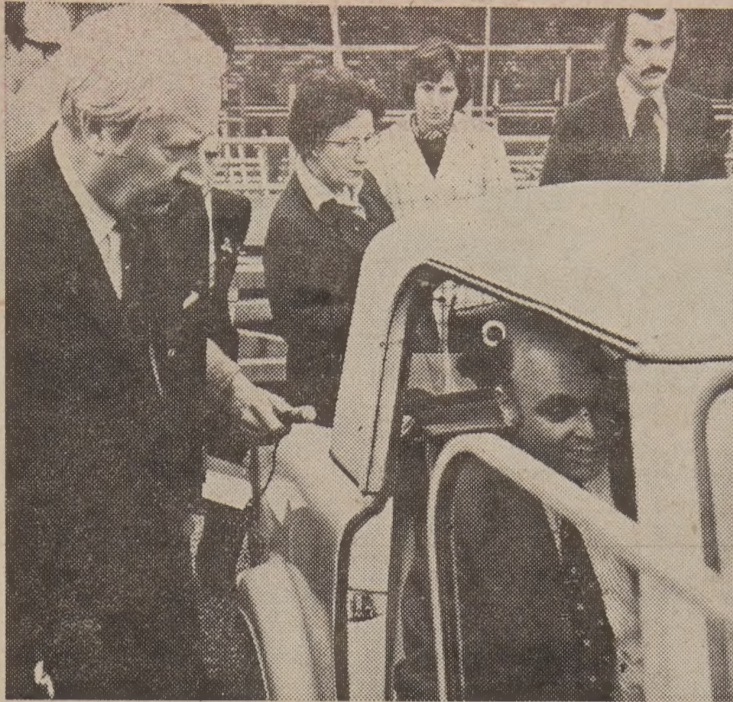
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DRIVERS PUT THEIR CASE TO PM



Right: Mrs. Myra Meyrick, a disabled mother, talks to Graham Hill about the merits of her converted Mini, which is fully hand controlled. In the background are some of the Press representatives who attended and publicised the meeting. Above: Richard Densham, a council member of the Disabled Drivers Motor Club, is pictured telling Edward Heath about the list of breakdowns he has had in his Ministry three-wheeler.



Sherry and "sympathy" at No. 10

MR. EDWARD HEATH displayed "a real interest and sympathy with their problems," said a spokesman after the Prime Minister had met a deputation pressing the cause of disabled drivers at a special demonstration of invalid vehicles laid on for him in Horse Guards Parade.

The deputation, led by former World Champion racing driver Graham Hill, thanked him for his past interest which resulted in concessions allowing the wider issue of cars and allowances to priority groups of handicapped people, instead of the much-criticised invalid tricycles.

They also thanked him for his part in setting up an independent inquiry into the mobility needs of the handicapped which is being carried out by Baroness Sharp—and presented him with a copy of the forceful evidence submitted by organ-



After the showing was over, Mr. Heath and the people he met went into No. 10 for a sherry and further discussions. Mr. Heath has promised action as soon as he gets a specially commissioned report on disabled drivers' vehicles from Lady Sharpe.

isations representing disabled drivers.

A little fleet of cars lined up for his inspection included the well-known one-seater invalid tricycle and frequently described as dangerous, the new P.70 Ministry issued invalid tricycle which is said to be more costly than an adapted small car, and the ideal—four-

wheel cars issued under the 1972 concessions with their seats set back for easy access, extremely easy driving control greater stability, safety and comfort, and with room for passengers.

Graham Hill and the deputation which included the Society's Director, left the Prime Minister in no doubt

about the cars disabled drivers would prefer, and after Mr. Heath had told them that naturally he had to wait for the Inquiry report, there was a glass of sherry all round, and drivers left well satisfied that Mr. Heath realised that a "real" car enables handicapped people to take the road on equal terms with the able-bodied.

Unexpected gift for Lord Stokes

Contd. from Page 1

of Lord Stokes, Chairman of BLMC.

So, watched by Press and television reporters, who recognise dramatic direct action when they see it, Lord Stokes received his unexpected gift. He was "not at home," but a porter at St. James Place, London, took in the keys and a letter from the Society which declared:

Dear Lord Stokes,

We cannot afford to keep this vehicle any longer. £1,700 of charity funds have already been spent because of breakdowns.

We cannot sell it as it would not be charitable to the buyer. Perhaps your company would like to display it somewhere as an example of your company's attitude to its customers.

If you would like to make a contribution to the handicapped children who have lost £3,000 because of this vehicle, our address is:

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY,
12 Park Crescent,
London, W.1.

P.S. It needs £300 worth of repairs now.

Needless to say, the van could not travel back home to roost with Lord Stokes under its own steam. It went there—as it has so often travelled in the past—on the end of a tow rope. From St. James Place it was towed away by the Police, and then towed away out of custody by BLMC for a survey so that the complaints—at last—could be evaluated.

As Spastics News went to press, the Society was still waiting for the survey report, and declaring that if it was not satisfied, it would accept the offer of a free engineering examination of the van which had been made by an independent company. It is no secret too, that after the "dumping" publicity, the Society has received offers from other manufacturers—one of them a for-

eign firm—to sell it a van at cut rates.

The history of the van makes unhappy reading, but here goes:

The BLMC 440, bought by the Society's offshoot Spastics Cards Ltd. in August 1970 at the height of the Buy-British Campaign, has drained £3,000 of charity funds in initial cost, repairs and hire costs. It now needs its third new engine.

During the first year of its life the doors fell off, it needed a new back axle, four new batteries, an alternator, a starter motor and a petrol pump. There were four smaller repairs.

After this relatively trouble-free year the van really became a problem. In the next 12 months it had a total of 51 repairs including a new engine, new steering gear, five speedo cables, new brakes, new cylinder head and a carburettor.

In August 1972 with the latest bill of £94 facing it, Spastics Cards Ltd. contacted Mr. A. F. Mayo, head of BLMC owner relation department.

Managing Director of Spastics Cards Ltd., Mr. John Kellett, said "After waiting five weeks for a reply, I was told that these faults were from wear and tear and nothing could be done to help us."

The Society says it cannot afford another van, and is in a great difficulty as it has 200,000 cards (made by spastics) waiting to be delivered from the Birmingham Workshop to Spastics Cards Ltd. at Iwer, Bucks.

Last year Lady Stokes bought some of the Society's cards. They were part of a consignment delivered to London in a hired van as the BLMC 440 had broken down.

All these reasons added up to become The Last Straw That Broke the Camel's Back, when the van broke down yet again at Swindon. So it was—over to you, Lord Stokes.

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